

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Elizabeth Lester on 10/22/09.

The application has been amended as follows:

In claim 2, line 1, between "a" and "product", inserted "single-component precursor of nonoxidic ceramic".

Claim 4 has been canceled.

In claim 4, line 1, replaced "4" with "2".

In claim 7, line 1, replaced "4" with "2".

In claim 8, line 1, replaced "4" with "2".

Reasons for Allowance

The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance: Applicant's process for preparing nonoxidic ceramic products is unobvious over the prior art of record because the prior art of record does not teach or suggest preparing a nonoxidic ceramic product, wherein ammonium salt is formed as a by-product in the process reactor and said salt is retained as a precipitate in the reactor before bringing the precipitate into the gas phase by heating the reactor to a temperature of at least 150⁰ C. Additionally, applicant's arguments filed 7/9/09 were found convincing to overcome the

rejection (issued 2/26/09) of independent claim 12 and all claims dependent thereof.

The prior art of record does not teach or suggest a two-stage reaction process as presently recited in claim 12, wherein two apparatuses per reaction stage are utilized, of which one apparatus is operated in the production mode while the other is operated in the regeneration mode at temperatures of at least 150⁰ C. All claims (2, 3, 5-17, 19, 21 and 23-24) are allowed. Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to ELVIS O. PRICE whose telephone number is (571)272-0644. The examiner can normally be reached on 9:30am to 6:00pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Daniel M. Sullivan can be reached on 571 272-0779. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Elvis O. Price/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 1621